

political influence can only feed that latter perception, further eroding that trust.”

If the public sees any judge and Supreme Court Justices as politicians in robes, the public’s confidence in the courts and in the rule of law itself can only be diminished, diminishing the Court’s power, including its power to act as a check on other branches of government.

Last August, Gallup found that 58 percent of Americans approve of the job the Supreme Court is doing. In fact, the Supreme Court’s approval ratings have actually increased in the last several years. Polling from February of this year finds that 35 percent of Americans approve of the job that we in Congress are doing, and that is up from 15 percent not many days ago.

I raise this data to demonstrate that the Supreme Court is an institution which a majority of Americans continues to place its trust in. That is a significant circumstance in today’s polarized world, but a majority of Americans still believes it can trust the Supreme Court. If we in Congress inject ourselves into the size of the Court’s composition, Justice Breyer is exactly right, in that the trust the American people have that the rulings will be delivered on a fair reading of the law will be further undermined.

On the Republican side of the aisle, we have seen our share of defeats in recent years, and not once when the Republican Party controlled Congress and had the White House were there efforts to expand the Supreme Court. Can you imagine how the left or the media would react if President Trump had attempted to expand the Court to 13 Justices and add 4 Republican-nominated Justices during his tenure?

We have not attempted to expand the Court because the Supreme Court should not serve as another legislative body. That is our job—a job we need to do much better than we do today so that more than one-third of the American people can place their confidence in us as we pass laws.

We have had the same number of Supreme Court Justices for more than 150 years. Perhaps the Judiciary Act of 2021 is less an effort to expand the Supreme Court than it is an effort to intimidate sitting Justices to deliver rulings favorable to the ideology of my colleagues who are proposing the legislation. From guns to abortion, to religious liberties, to other hot-button issues, my colleagues are threatening the Justices either to deliver favorable rulings or to not take up divisive cases at all. If this is what my colleagues seek to accomplish, I am confident that the independence and integrity of our Justices will prevail. Indeed, this must prevail to preserve the American people’s confidence in the institution of the courts, in the judicial system, in the Supreme Court.

I am disappointed because, rather than working with each other across the aisle—across this aisle right here—

to pass legislation, the Democrats are more interested in pursuing a larger Supreme Court and more interested in eliminating the filibuster to pass their agenda—to stack the Court to prevent their legislation from being struck down as unconstitutional.

Process matters around here. We have to get to the point at which we utilize the process to get a fair and just result, wherein all people’s voices are heard, wherein all Members of the Senate have the opportunity to express their views and have an opportunity for that to be voted on, but we don’t skew the process to get a desired outcome. We all need to do our jobs to convince our colleagues that we are right in our positions, that our legislation is meritorious. We don’t and we shouldn’t change the process to get our way.

The checks and balances of our Constitution work. They have worked for a long time. They are important to this country. When we talk about how divisive things are on the Senate floor and in this country today, the solution to that is not to change the rules in the middle of the game. It is to abide by the rules that protect our freedoms and liberties.

I implore my colleagues to have the same faith in these constitutional guardrails as I do, to have the same faith in the independence and fairness of the Supreme Court that a majority of Americans has, and to believe that we can work together, that you and I can work together on behalf of the Americans we serve, the Americans we represent, without resorting to acts that will damage us all today and for generations to come.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate resume legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the cloture motions with respect to amendment 1445 and S. 937 be withdrawn; that when the Senate resumes consideration of S. 937 on Thursday, April 22, the following amendments be reported by number and they be the only amendments in order: Cruz-Kennedy No. 1456, Lee No. 1425, Blackburn No. 1458; further, that at 11:30 a.m., the Senate vote in relation to the amendments in the order

listed; that amendment No. 1445, as amended, if amended, be agreed to; the bill be considered and read a third time; and the Senate vote on passage of the bill, as amended, with 60 affirmative votes required for adoption of the amendments and passage of the bill, with 4 minutes of debate equally divided prior to each vote, all with no intervening action or debate; and, finally, that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there an objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

TRIBUTE TO JOE GROSSMAN

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, my friend Joe Grossman has approached his work for the last 35 years with a head for numbers and a heart for people. As an accountant turned CEO of the largest healthcare organization in Southeastern Kentucky, Joe’s experienced leadership has helped improve the quality of life for hundreds of thousands. This summer, Joe will close his chapter leading Appalachian Regional Healthcare, ARH, and a career of excellence and accomplishment. As he begins a well-deserved retirement, I would like to share my congratulations and gratitude for his many contributions to the Bluegrass.

For nearly two decades, Joe has been entrusted with key financial and operational positions at ARH. At each step, he has helped the system expand and thrive. When the position opened, Joe was the obvious choice to take over as president and CEO. He pushed ARH to continue growing in service to its patients, employees, and communities.

Today, the system operates 13 hospitals in Kentucky and West Virginia as well as 80-plus clinic locations. With a team of more than 6,000 dedicated professionals, ARH serves nearly 400,000 individuals across the region. The system’s extensive reach makes a transformative impact on rural Kentucky communities every day and helps make the area a destination for top-tier medical talent. Joe’s leadership even contributed to a national magazine naming ARH one of the Top 10 Employers in Kentucky.

Overseeing an organization of ARH’s size and importance would be a remarkable feat in any year, but Joe exceeded expectations once again during the pandemic. Last month, I visited the ARH facility in Hazard to speak with Joe and his team about the roll-out of the multiple safe and effective COVID-19 vaccines. At that time, three

of the five counties in Kentucky with the top vaccination rates were in ARH's service area. I was proud to congratulate Joe and his team of healthcare heroes who were getting shots in arms to beat this virus.

Joe's contributions to Kentucky extend beyond the hospital doors. He has gone to great lengths to personally partner with the communities he serves. His work with organizations like One East KY, the Hazard-Perry County Economic Development Alliance, and One Harlan County has helped encourage new growth and opportunity. Joe developed a vision for a healthy and successful Kentucky, and he worked tirelessly over the years to bring it closer to reality.

So, we are all going to miss working with Joe. But now he gets to spend more time on his most important roles, husband to Leigh, father, and grandfather. Along with Joe's colleagues and friends, I extend my best wishes for a fulfilling retirement. On behalf of the Senate, I would like to congratulate Joe on all of his success and thank him for his leadership in Kentucky.

NOMINATION OF COLIN HACKETT KAHL

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. President, here we are again, teeing up another discharge motion for another unqualified Biden administration nominee.

If there is one good thing I can say about Colin Kahl, the nominee for Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, it is that you never have to wonder where he stands on the issues. He is very consistent.

Unfortunately, he has been consistently wrong on some of the last decade's most important foreign policy questions.

In 2019, when disaster struck all along on our southern border, he labeled the situation "Trump's fake border crisis" and "a phony terrorism threat." That is a take that aged well, to be sure.

His judgment calls on the actions and motivations of our most dangerous adversaries have also been particularly terrible.

When President Trump warned the Iranian regime not to resume their nuclear activities, Kahl declared that "war drums" were already sounding. We know that wasn't true.

When President Trump made the decision to eliminate terrorist leader Soleimani, Kahl was positive that the strike had started a war. It hadn't. When I questioned Kahl during his confirmation hearings, he equated Iranian proxies killing Americans with our subsequent, proportionate strike against Soleimani, saying, "There were provocations on both sides." Indeed.

Kahl was absolutely sure that given the chance, John Bolton, of all people, would twist available intelligence and singlehandedly start wars with Iran and North Korea. Another miss.

He also predicted that Trump would jump into Syria and start a war with

Assad and the Russians, which also didn't happen.

Those hot takes earned him a lot of ink in Foreign Policy magazine but not a lot of respect. I don't know if he wrote those things because he wanted to put President Trump in the hot seat or because he honestly believed them, but I don't think the answer to that question matters.

If he believed them, then it is proof of his terrible judgment.

If he wrote them to inflame the progressive base, it is proof he is willing to trivialize the prospect of armed conflict for clicks.

How in the world can President Biden expect us to vote for that?

In addition to his poor judgment, Mr. Kahl has also attached himself to truly terrible policy decisions.

He opposed bipartisan legislation that would have imposed sanctions on the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps.

He staffed the effort to condemn Israel at the United Nations Security Council.

He is "open" to moving away from the nuclear triad.

Perhaps worst of all, when he served in the Obama administration as Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for the Middle East, he dropped the ball on a status of forces agreement that would have allowed U.S. forces to remain in Iraq.

That failure led to the rise of ISIS.

I have examined Mr. Kahl's record and found nothing but a history of bad policy judgment, a volatile disposition, and a terrible temper that manifests in inflammatory rhetoric.

That might be a great resume for a pundit, but it is not the body of work I want to see from someone who will be responsible for developing national security and defense strategy.

I oppose this discharge motion, I oppose this nomination, and I urge my colleagues to spend a few minutes with Mr. Kahl's resume before placing him in such a powerful position at DOD.

250TH ANNIVERSARY OF VASSALBORO, MAINE

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I rise today to commemorate the 250th anniversary of the Town of Vassalboro, ME. Vassalboro was built with a spirit of determination and resiliency that still guides the community today, and this is a time to celebrate the generations of hard-working and caring people who have made it such a wonderful place to live, work, and raise families.

The year of Vassalboro's incorporation, 1771, was but one milestone in a long journey of progress. For thousands of years, the land along the great Kennebec River was the home of the Abenaki Tribe, who hunted, fished, and tilled the fertile soil. The reverence the Abenaki had for the natural beauty and resources of the region is upheld by the people of Vassalboro today.

Vassalboro's roots run deep into American history. It originally was

part of the lands granted to the Pilgrims of the Plymouth Colony in the 1600s. Later, the town became home to a large settlement of Quakers and a center of the movement to abolish slavery. The Society of Friends continues to have a positive presence in the town today. The statue of the Union soldier in Monument Park stands in silent tribute to the many patriots who have stepped forward to serve the cause of freedom.

With the mighty Kennebec River providing power, Vassalboro was home to many lumber, grain, and textile mills. Built in 1850, the Olde Mill on Main Street was one of the largest mills in New England and world famous for the quality of the cashmere it produced. The wealth produced by hard work and determination was invested in schools and churches to create a true community.

Today, visitors and residents alike enjoy Vassalboro's quiet parks, beautiful historic buildings, and exciting outdoor recreation opportunities. The energy and planning that are going into the town's 250th anniversary celebration demonstrate the pride townspeople have in their town.

Mr. President, Vassalboro's 250th anniversary is not merely about the passing of time, it is about human accomplishment. We celebrate the people who, for longer than America has been a nation, have pulled together, cared for one another, and built a great community. Thanks to those who came before, Vassalboro, ME, has a wonderful history. Thanks to those there today, it has a bright future.

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 10:56 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has agreed to the following concurrent resolution, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H. Con. Res. 30. Concurrent resolution providing for a joint session of Congress to receive a message from the President.

The message further announced that the House has agreed to the following resolution:

H. Res. 333. Resolution relative to the death of the Honorable Walter F. Mondale, a former Vice President of the United States of America.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-766. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Leonardo S.p.a. Helicopters; Amendment 39-0649" (RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2020-0649) received in the Office